



# PHARMACISTS RECOVERY PROGRAM

For information or assistance, call any time: **1.800.522.9198**

The Pharmacists Recovery Program exists to support the rehabilitation and safe reintegration of California's licensed pharmacists and intern pharmacist whose ability to practice have been impacted by substance abuse or mental health challenges.

## Do I Need Help?

If you're questioning whether you need help for substance use or mental health, there's a good chance you would benefit from support. These challenges tend to grow over time, becoming more serious and difficult to address when not recognized early. If you are too close to the problem, it's very easy to lose objectivity. Uncertain or misdirected efforts often serve only to increase frustration and stress, making the problem seem unsolvable. For pharmacists and intern pharmacists, unaddressed substance use or mental health concerns can impair professional judgment and put the public at risk, as well as, your career, your relationships, and potentially your life.

## You're Not Alone...

Substance use-related and mental health challenges are growing concerns in the pharmacy profession.



From 2020 to 2024, pharmacists reported higher rates of substance use than other healthcare providers, with approximately 12.8% reporting drug use within the past year.



A study found that 46% of pharmacists and 62% of pharmacy students had used controlled substances at some point without a prescription.



Up to 15% of pharmacy students reported lifetime misuse of prescription opioids, with current use ranging from 1% to 6%.



In 2021, burnout and workplace stress were reported by over 70% of pharmacists, citing increased workloads, long hours, and lack of support.



Nearly one in three pharmacists report symptoms of anxiety or depression, with these numbers spiking during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pharmacists and intern pharmacists face uniquely high levels of stress, emotional labor, long hours, and frequent exposure to suffering, all while often being expected to suppress their own vulnerabilities. Easy access to controlled substances, stigma around seeking help, and professional repercussions tied to mental health disclosures further complicate the landscape. These conditions make them particularly susceptible to burnout, depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. A dedicated, confidential recovery program provides a critical lifeline offering support, structured monitoring, and access to treatment while preserving careers and, ultimately, protecting public safety through rehabilitation rather than punishment.

## Who Provides the Service?

The California State Board of Pharmacy contracts with Premier Health Group to provide confidential assessment, referral, and monitoring services for the Pharmacists Recovery Program. Premier Health Group is a multidisciplinary behavioral health organization committed to reducing the negative impact of addiction and mental illness on California communities.

Arrangements will be made for the individual to meet with a licensed professional for a confidential assessment and development of a monitoring plan, and, if clinically appropriate, recommendations for treatment.

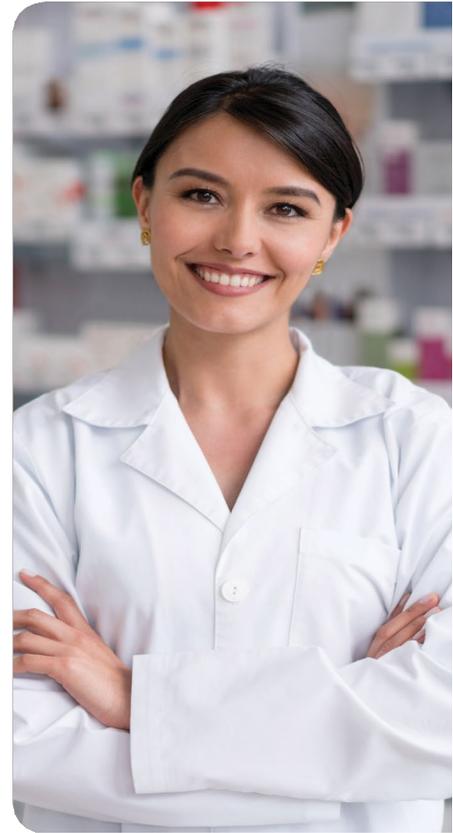
## What is the Program?

The purpose of the Pharmacists Recovery Program is to identify and evaluate the nature and severity of the substance use and/or mental illness, develop a recovery plan contract to monitor a participant's recovery treatment as well as provide encouragement and support. In the quickest, most confidential and least stressful manner possible, the individual receives the proper help to face the problem, deal with it and, if possible, return to the profession.

# Who Can Participate in the Program?

Any California licensed pharmacist or intern pharmacist who is experiencing problematic substance use or mental health challenges may voluntarily seek assistance by contacting the 24-hour toll-free number. Most individuals experiencing substance use and/or mental health concerns ultimately wish they had done so prior to the concern worsening or contributing to further negative repercussions.

Pharmacists and intern pharmacists are encouraged to self-refer to the Pharmacists Recovery Program. The Board of Pharmacy may refer licensees at the time of initiating an investigation or upon completing an investigation when the primary concern involves substance use and/or mental illness, and when no other serious violations of practice law have occurred. In more serious cases, the Board of Pharmacy may mandate a licensee contact the Pharmacists Recovery Program for an assessment as a condition of probation or in conjunction with disciplinary action.



All voluntary requests for information and assistance are strictly confidential; a participant's information is not subject to discovery or subpoena. Arrangements will be made for individuals that self-refer to meet with a licensed professional who will make a confidential evaluation and develop a plan to appropriately monitor the participant's recovery. Pharmacists and intern pharmacists who successfully use the program are assured that their problem and its nature will remain confidential. If a participant poses a threat to themselves or the health and safety of the public, or if a participant is terminated from the program for noncompliance or for failure to derive benefit, or if the Pharmacists Recovery Program's monitoring of the program discloses a misdiagnosis or case mismanagement, information about a participant's participation in the Program may be disclosed and reported to the Board.

## How to Obtain Services

If you are struggling with – or live or work with a pharmacist or intern pharmacist who has a substance use and/or mental illness concern – the Pharmacists Recovery Program's toll-free number (800) 522-9198, is available twenty-four hours a day.

---

## Sources

American Addiction Centers. (n.d.). Rehab for pharmacists: Substance abuse in pharmacy professionals. Retrieved May 30, 2025, from <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/healthcare-professionals/rehab-for-pharmacists>

Boulanger, R., Meunier, M., Tanguay, B., Côté, J., & Dumont, S. (2023). Mental health of intensive care unit professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review. *Journal of Intensive Care*, 11(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40560-023-00667-2>

National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. (2023). Supporting mental health and well-being for pharmacists and pharmacy staff. Retrieved May 30, 2025, from <https://nabp.pharmacy/news/blog/supporting-mental-health-and-well-being-for-pharmacists-and-pharmacy-staff/>

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. (2022). Symptoms of mental health conditions among public health workers during the COVID-19 pandemic — United States, March–April 2021. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70(13), 779–784. <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7013a3>

U.S. Pharmacist. (2022). Mental health awareness for pharmacists. Retrieved May 30, 2025, from <https://www.uspharmacist.com/article/mental-health-awareness>

Vander Weg, M. W., Jacobs, E. A., & Hovell, M. F. (2016). Substance use among pharmacists and student pharmacists. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 80(8), Article 136. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe808136>